

Minutes: Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council (ECICC)
February 17, 2012, 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
The Cornhusker Hotel, Lancaster Room 1-2-3; Lincoln, Nebraska

Pam Dobrovolny, vice-chair, opened the meeting of the Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council at 9:00 a.m. on February 17, 2012 at the Cornhusker Hotel, Lincoln, Nebraska. Pam noted the posting of a copy of the Open Meetings Act. Those in attendance made self-introductions.

Members present: Mike Adams, Susan F. Adams, Rebecca Bimler, Pam Dobrovolny, Melinda Graham, Cheryl Hammond, Jane Happe, Melody Hobson, J. P. Holys, Dr. Sian Jones-Jobst, Eleanor Kirkland, Heather Krieger, Amy LaPointe, Diane Lewis, Carol McClain, Dawn Mollenkopf, Christina Pelton, Shirley Pickens-White, Roger Reikofski, Julie Rother, Susan Strahm, Carolyn Thiele, Salene Ulrich, Cristen Witte.

Members absent: Annie Bruns, Eric Dunning, Heather Gill, Senator Pete Pirsch, Deborah Ross, DeAnna Schulze

Also in attendance: ECICC Staff: Terry Rohren, facilitator; Susan Dahm, secretary; *Technical Assistants:* Administration for Children and Families, Head Start State-based Training and Technical Assistance–Mary Finney-Afrank; PTI-Nebraska–Connie Shockley; Munroe Meyer Institute –Mark Smith; Nebraska Children and Families Foundation–Beaky Veak; NDHHS–Lynne Brehm, Amy Bunnell, Paula Eurek, Sue Spanhake, Pat Urzedowski; NDE–Amy Bornemeier, Shannon Fowler, Pat Frost, Pam Kasl, Joan Luebbers.

The Family Leadership Team met in a working session beginning at 8:00 a.m. before the opening of the Council meeting.

MEETING AGENDA:

1. Opening and Announcements:

i. Approval of minutes

Pam asked for discussion of the December 2, 2011 ECICC meeting minutes submitted and provided to members in the pre-meeting packet. Susan Dahm, secretary, made a correction to the minutes to include three technical assistants who were present at the meeting: Amy Bornemeier, Shannon Fowler, and Sue Spanhake. The corrected minutes were re-posted on the ECICC webpage. There was no other discussion.

- * Motion, J.P. Holys; seconded, Carol McClain: To approve the ECICC minutes of December 2, 2011, as corrected. The motion passed by roll call vote: yes–24, no–0, abstain–0.

Voting yes: Mike Adams, Susan F. Adams, Rebecca Bimler, Pam Dobrovolny, Melinda Graham, Cheryl Hammond, Jane Happe, Melody Hobson, J. P. Holys, Dr. Sian Jones-Jobst, Eleanor Kirkland, Heather Krieger, Amy LaPointe, Diane Lewis, Carol McClain, Dawn Mollenkopf, Christina Pelton, Shirley Pickens-White, Roger Reikofski, Julie Rother, Susan Strahm, Carolyn Thiele, Salene Ulrich, Cristen Witte.

ii. Meeting reminders

Terry Rohren reminded the Council that the next scheduled meeting of the Council is in Grand Island at the Mid-Town Holiday on May 11, 2012. She also noted the change of meeting dates from February 8, 2013 to February 15, 2013.

iii. Race to the Top application

Melody Hobson informed the Council that Nebraska's Early Childhood Race to the Top grant application was not funded. Melody provided some details about Nebraska's application and about other states' applications that were funded. Eleanor Kirkland reported hearing about proposed plans for a 50-state competition to help states develop quality elements for early childhood.

2. Recommendation from the ECICC Steering Committee for Committee Structure

Pam Dobrovolny and Jane Happe reviewed the recommendations for ECICC committees that were discussed at the December 2, 2011 meeting, and the Council's charge to the Steering Committee to develop a proposal for a new committee structure. Pam and Jane described the process that the Steering Committee used to determine a committee structure that would incorporate both the Council's responsibilities as defined in state and federal statutes, and the ECICC goal areas.¹ Based on this perspective the Steering Committee developed a proposal to divide the statutory responsibilities among four committees with each committee's work encompassing the four goals as they relate to the statutory responsibilities of the particular committee. Members received the proposal by e-mail and in the packet of materials mailed to each member prior to the meeting. The presenters also explained a proposed process for making committee assignments and a proposal for a new agenda structure, which members also received prior to the meeting.

Council members broke into table groups for discussion. Concerns reported from those discussions included how Part C responsibilities would fit within the committee structure, if the Family Leadership Team would remain active, concerns about assignment to a committee, and when the new committee structure would begin. In response to concerns about assignments, Pam explained that members would have an opportunity to make first and second choices for committee preference. The Steering Committee would make committee assignments on a yearly basis and would make efforts to give Council members one of their choices while needing to keep a balance of number of members and a cross-section of representation among the committees.

- * Motion, Carolyn Thiele; second, Melody Hobson: To approve the new committee structure as proposed by the Steering Committee. There was no further discussion. The motion passed by roll call vote: yes–23, no–0, abstain–0.

Voting yes: Mike Adams, Susan F. Adams, Rebecca Bimler, Pam Dobrovolny, Melinda Graham, Cheryl Hammond, Jane Happe, Melody Hobson, J. P. Holys, Dr. Sian Jones-Jobst, Eleanor Kirkland, Heather Krieger, Amy LaPointe, Carol McClain, Dawn Mollenkopf, Christina Pelton, Shirley Pickens-White, Roger Reikofski, Julie Rother, Susan Strahm, Carolyn Thiele, Salene Ulrich, Cristen Witte.

There was additional discussion about when to start the new committee structure. Pam explained that the November 2012 meeting was proposed considering that the May 2012 meeting is the traveling meeting, when the focus is on regional services and issues; the August 2012 meeting is the last meeting for members whose terms are ending; and the November 2012 meeting would be the first meeting for new members. Members expressed concerns that waiting until November would put the Council in a lame duck status for most of year and that the August meeting would be an opportunity to try the new structure before new members came onto the Council.

- * Motion, Melinda Graham; second, Salene Ulrich: That the new committee structure begin with the August 24, 2012 meeting. There was no discussion. The motion passed by roll call vote: yes–19, no–1, abstain–0.

Voting yes: Mike Adams, Rebecca Bimler, Pam Dobrovolny, Melinda Graham, Cheryl Hammond, Jane Happe, Melody Hobson, J. P. Holys, Dr. Sian Jones-Jobst, Eleanor Kirkland, Amy LaPointe, Diane Lewis, Dawn Mollenkopf, Christina Pelton, Shirley Pickens-White, Roger Reikofski, Julie Rother, Salene Ulrich, Cristen Witte. *Voting no:* Carol McClain.

3. Proposed agenda format for ECICC meetings with the new committee structure.

¹ ECICC goals presented in the *ECICC 2010 Strategic Report to the Governor on the Status of Early Childhood*:

- Early Care and Education in Nebraska is high quality, developmentally appropriate and accessible to all children.
- All Nebraska children have access to a dental/medical home, and receive high quality health services.
- The early childhood social, emotional and behavioral health needs of Nebraska's children are met.
- Nebraska families support their children's optimal development by providing safe, healthy, and nurturing environments.

The meeting continued with discussion about the proposal for a new agenda structure. Concerns included when the Family Leadership Team would meet, when committees would meet, and how committees would report to the Council. Suggestions included use of a consent agenda, using a form to structure committee reports, limiting the amount of time allowed for committee reports, and whether the reports should be made to small groups, as proposed, or to the Council as a whole. Comments favored reporting to the Council as a whole to ensure that everyone would get the same information. The group also discussed pros and cons for lengthening the meeting time of the Council.

- * Motion, Christy Pelton; seconded, Sian Jones-Jobst: That the Steering Committee develop an agenda/meeting structure within close parameters of current meeting time based on the feedback heard in discussion. The motion passed by roll call vote: yes–24, no–0, abstain–0.

Voting yes: Mike Adams, Susan F. Adams, Rebecca Bimler, Pam Dobrovolny, Melinda Graham, Cheryl Hammond, Jane Happe, Melody Hobson, J. P. Holys, Dr. Sian Jones-Jobst, Eleanor Kirkland, Heather Krieger, Amy LaPointe, Diane Lewis, Carol McClain, Dawn Mollenkopf, Christina Pelton, Shirley Pickens-White, Roger Reikofski, Julie Rother, Susan Strahm, Carolyn Thiele, Salene Ulrich, Cristen Witte.

4. IDEA–Part C Plan, Budget and Updates

Council members received handouts related to IDEA-Part C. Included were: 1) discretionary activities to be funded in the 2012 Part C budget application; 2) a letter from OSEP reporting findings from the September 2011 verification visit; and, 3) Indicator results reported to OSEP (federal Office of Special Education Programs) in the FFY 2012 Annual Performance Report (APR) for IDEA–Part C. Members also received a printed report/booklet on Part C activities funded through ARRA.

- a. Part C Budget Application: Carol McClain explained the Part C the discretionary budget and potential sequestration of funding. She briefly highlighted several of the activities that would be funded with the discretionary budget. Eleanor Kirkland publically thanked Part C for the literacy kits provided from ARRA funds for Early Head Start in the state. The 2012 IDEA Part C application/budget is open for public comment and is due April 15, 2012. Carol briefly answered questions.

- * Motion, Mike Adams; seconded, Sue Adams: To approve the 2012 Part C application and budget (discretionary). The motion passed by roll call vote: yes–20, no–0, abstain–4.

Voting yes: Mike Adams, Susan F. Adams, Rebecca Bimler, Pam Dobrovolny, Melinda Graham, Cheryl Hammond, Jane Happe, Melody Hobson, J. P. Holys, Dr. Sian Jones-Jobst, Eleanor Kirkland, Amy LaPointe, Diane Lewis, Carol McClain, Dawn Mollenkopf, Christina Pelton, Shirley Pickens-White, Roger Reikofski, Julie Rother, Susan Strahm, Carolyn Thiele, Salene Ulrich, Cristen Witte. *Abstaining:* Melody Hobson, Heather Krieger, Carol McClain, Susan Strahm.

- b. OSEP visit: Carol McClain described the continuous improvement visit (CIV) to Nebraska that OSEP conducted in September 2011. Carol explained that this was the first time fiscal management of IDEA requirements was included as part of the visit. OSEP also reviewed statutes and regulations, and how the state monitors the system. In February 2012, OSEP sent their response of that visit to the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE). OSEP gave a favorable review, but did find the state in noncompliance in the area of dispute resolution, which requires the state to submit a corrective action plan. Carol explained that Nebraska has never had a formal dispute related to Part C, but they will still examine and correct the process as required by OSEP. Carol responded to questions from meeting participants.

Carol also briefly explained OSEP’s requirements for a “Results Topic.” The Co-Leads (NDE and DHHS) for Part C chose to address ChildFind through CAPTA to increase the number of verifications of children referred through the CAPTA process. As part of this effort, Carol informed the Council of their need for a stakeholder group and asked how the new committee

structure would function in this regard—previously the ECICC Gaps and Barriers Committee served as the stakeholder group. Pam Dobrovolny said that probably this function would come from the regulations committee, but reminded the Council that all committees would address gaps and barriers as they relate to the particular committee. She assured Carol that a group would be designated from the membership to serve as stakeholders for Part C.

- c. Annual Performance Report: Joan Luebbers and Amy Bunnell provided updates on the Part C APR and changes in the Part C Regulations. The APR was submitted to OSEP on February 1, 2012. Joan reviewed the results in meeting targets of the APR Indicators. Amy referred to the printed report on Part C activities funded by ARRA funds, and gave a brief explanation so Council members would fully understand how these funds were used for Part C. Amy also explained changes to the Part C Regulations. Links to the Part C Regulations are on the EDN website: <http://edn.ne.gov/>

5. Child Care Regulations Update

Pat Urzedowski, NDHHS, informed the Council that the revised child care regulations were out for public comment. She provided a signup sheet for members who want to receive the public hearing comments. Pat explained the process of approval to the proposed regulations changes. After review by the Nebraska Attorney-General, which examines the regulations for legality and consistency with other state regulations and statutes, the regulations will move to the Governor's Research Office. Ninety days after approval the regulations will be operative. Pat highlighted some of the changes to the regulations. The hearing draft can be found at: <http://www.sos.ne.gov/rules-and-regs/regtrack/proposals/0000000000001008.pdf>

6. Family Story

During the lunch hour ECICC member Salene Ulrich provided the family story. With her were her two daughters, Shaeden and Taylen, and Shaeden's caregiver, Bonnie. Until she was about five months old, Shaeden was developing normally, except for a hip problem. She began responding to physical therapy to correct the hip dysplasia, but within months, she began to regress and lose abilities that she had previously. She was referred to Children's Hospital in Omaha where the doctor suspected Rett Syndrome, which testing confirmed.

Rett Syndrome is a neurological disorder resulting from a mutated gene. Usually only girls affected with it survive. The syndrome follows a typical path of normal development, but between 3 months and 2 years the development of physical abilities stops and even regresses. Many of the Rett girls, including Shaeden, develop seizures and other physical traits that make communication difficult.

When Shaeden was diagnosed, the family received referral for services through their school district. Because of Shaeden's age, they began receiving services in their home. Now that Shaeden is school age, she receives services at the school, even though she and her sister are being home-schooled. Salene described the difficulty of not having family close by, so Bonnie, a retired nurse from the community, has become an essential member of their family team. Therapists also work with the family including finding activities that the sisters can do together.

Salene described their hopes for Shaeden, which include the possibility of using an eye-gazing communication device to help Shaeden communicate more than the tongue-clicking signals she currently uses. The family is trying to look ahead at the services she will need to achieve the goals they hope for her. They plan to continue home schooling the girls with help from the district. Salene and Taylen answered questions from the audience.

7. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

8. Early Childhood Legislation in 2012

Becky Veak provided printed materials listing 2012 Nebraska legislation affecting Early Childhood. She also demonstrated the newly developed website for First Five Nebraska:

www.firstfivebrask.org/. Of particular interest to Council members is the information on current Nebraska legislation: <http://www.firstfivebrask.org/nebraska-is-taking-action/current-legislation/>

This webpage will be the best way for Council members to stay current on early childhood legislation and will replace the information that the ECICC Legislative and Communications Committee (LCC) provided in past years. Eleanor Kirkland noted that the LCC had identified priority bills and asked whether that would continue. Becky said that First Five Nebraska website would track all bills related to early childhood, but they also have identified their own priority bills. If ECICC wants to track certain bills, First Five Nebraska could help with that, as well as answer questions about current legislation. Becky also noted the “take action” feature on the website that members can use as private citizens, but reminded meeting participants that the Council, itself, does not take positions on bills.

9. Early Childhood Systems of Care (ECSOC) Pilot Project

Lynne Brehm, DHHS, provided a handout of the ECSOC self-assessment that has been used with select communities to help identify and prioritize needs for early childhood mental health services. She briefly described the pilot project and the expectations for wider dissemination.

Carolyn Thiele, Omaha, informed the Council about the Coalition for Advancement of Children’s Mental Health (CACMH), a collaboration of 30 metro agencies, treatments teams, child care providers, and UNO, who were one of the groups to respond in the pilot project. Their responses (179) did not rate any services in their community as “adequate;” and the self-assessment provided the Coalition with a focus of five priorities from findings of the survey.

Cristen Witte, Valentine, worked with a committee in her region to examine their availability of services, especially mental health services for children. She said she would have liked more medical representation and child care professionals on the committee, but they still found the process very useful. Together they were able to share ideas about what to do in the absence of services and are looking at ways of expanding more services regionally.

Heather Gill, Ogallala, provided a written report to Lynne that said she had visited physician clinics to provide information and resources, since physicians were not represented on their committee.

These pilot groups gave Lynne’s group feedback that will be used to improve the self-assessment instrument. Lynne cautioned that the instrument is not yet ready for general use. Julie Rother, Wayne, said that public health was doing community assessments and that this information would be a helpful addition.

10. SAC Grant Updates

- a. Needs assessment survey: Eleanor Kirkland informed the Council of the needs assessment that the Head Start State Collaboration Office (HSSCO) is using with state Head Start grantees. She suggested that it could be used as a model for the needs assessment required in the Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007, for which ECICC serves as the State Advisory Council (SAC). She would like to test the needs assessment with ECICC members after the state Head Start grantees submit their responses (due March 15).
- b. Unified data system: Shannon Fowler brought the Council up-to-date on the work she has done and some of the plans for future work. She elaborated on some of her current areas of work, which include working on priorities with the Data Coalition, aligning various indicators from Together for Kids and Families information, and looking for ways to identify and get information on children being missed in existing data. She is also working with the

development of a prototype of training registry and making plans for a second data summit in October. Shannon is also working with the NDE Office of Early Childhood to submit a proposal for the NDE Data Conference about what Early Childhood is doing with data.

- c. School readiness project: Amy Bornemeier provided copies of a one-page handout, "Getting Ready for Kindergarten," which she developed to use in her presentations for groups, meetings, and conferences, and asked for feedback from the group. J.P. Holys inquired how the piece was connecting to preschools. Amy acknowledged that in this instance quality preschool is understood and that this piece is intended as a "what can I do" piece to inform families and child care providers.

At the end of the presentation, Terry Rohren clarified that the SAC grant is about supporting these ECICC priorities, and that ECICC is not funded out of the SAC grant for purposes of sustainability. Eleanor noted that the "messages" from these projects will carry on and ways will be identified to carry out the priorities.

11. Boystown and PTI Family Care Enhancement Project

Laura Maddox from Boystown distributed a brochure describing Professional Parent Consultant Service (PPCS) and discussed the collaborative project between Boystown and PTI-Nebraska to train parents and place them in physician clinics to increase coordination and care of children services. The project stemmed from a Medical Home collaborative grant which formed teams to evaluate services to families and examine strengths and weaknesses within practices. The project identified a need for coordinated services and connecting families to resources. A project in Rhode Island that placed parent/family members within doctors' offices to help families navigate services was used as a model for the Nebraska project. The project was brought to Nebraska through the Early Development Network using ARRA funds and parents were placed in physician practices within the Medical Home Collaborative. They have received positive feedback from physicians and families and also have found that the project has help reduce Medicaid claims and supports and enhances the EDN referral process. They hope to expand the project. Laura responded to questions about training for the parents who are now called parent resource coordinators (PRCs).

12. Agenda items for May 11, 2012 Meeting

The May 11, 2012 meeting agenda will include presentations about early childhood services in the Grand Island region. Other suggestions for agenda items were:

- Draft of the revised ECICC By-Laws
- Proposal for a new meeting/agenda format
- Members to identify top two choices for committee assignment
- Part C Regulations Draft
- Preliminary findings from the HSSCO needs assessment
- Family Leadership Team report out.

- * Motion to adjourn: Melinda Graham; seconded, Mike Adams. The motion passed by voice vote. With no other items to be discussed, the Council adjourned at 3:05 p.m.

Next meeting: May 11, 2012, 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.; Midtown Holiday Inn, 2503 S. Locust St., Grand Island, Nebraska.

MEETING HANDOUTS:

- ✓ ECICC Steering Committee Proposal for Committee Structure (a.k.a. purple proposal)
- ✓ Proposed New Agenda Structure
- ✓ Family Leadership Committee Charter, approved January 4, 2012

- ✓ 2012 IDEA Part C Application-Nebraska: Discretionary Activities by Other Agencies to be Funded Using IDEA Part C Funds
- ✓ Letter: To Dr. Breed, Nebraska Department of Education from Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP)
- ✓ Nebraska Annual Performance Report for Part C: FFY 2010 Indicators
- ✓ Nebraska Department of Education/Nebraska Head Start State Collaboration Office Key Updates; February 17, 2012
- ✓ ECICC-State Advisory Council Grant Project Update–February 2012
- ✓ “Getting Ready for Kindergarten: What Parents & Providers Can Do to Support Children”
- ✓ 2012 Nebraska Legislation Affecting Early Childhood–First Five Nebraska
- ✓ Community Early Childhood System of Care ECSOC Self Assessment
- ✓ Brochure: Professional Parent Consultant Services
- ✓ IDEA Part C American Recovery & Reinvestment Act (ARRA)–Nebraska Early Development Network (EDN): Compilation of Statewide Initiative Summaries, October 2011
- ✓ Newsletter: “Home Visiting”– January 2012, Volume 1, Issue 2